

REMARKS

In this response, Applicant amends claims 1, 3, 8, 15, 21, 24 and 25, and cancels claims 2, 9, 16 and 22. The Examiner previously indicated that claims 2, 9, 16 and 22 contained allowable subject matter and would be allowable if placed in independent form. Applicant has amended claims 1, 8, 15 and 21 to correspond to claims 2, 9, 16 and 22 in independent form. Since these are the only independent claims in this case, all claims now pending are in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendments set forth above under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 since the amendments place the claims in condition for allowance.

C

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending are now in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If there are any additional fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666. Questions regarding this matter should be directed to the undersigned at (310) 207-3800.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Dated: 4/9/04

Thomas Coester

Thomas M. Coester
Reg. No. 39,637

12400 Wilshire Blvd.
Seventh Floor
Los Angeles, California 90025
(310) 207-3800

CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE:

I hereby certify that this correspondence for Patent Application No. 09/544,738 is being facsimile transmitted to Examiner Shick C. Hom, USPTO via fax no. (703) 872-9315 on April 9, 2004.

Susan M. Barrette

Susan M. Barrette

4/9/04

Date

C